1;Seligmann & Seligmann E-5 (1907-1908) 1911
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622 unconsciously fostered by him. A brief account of our visit to
156 Dambani will best show the present condition of these people.

While in the jungle we were suddenly met by four Veddas,
177 who greeted the Arachi in a deep and apparently fierce tone, he
576 returning the greeting in the same manner. To our surprise these men came up to one of us (C. G. S.), shook hands, and then turned and led us to their village, on the way to which we passed a couple of "tame" buffalo that tried to charge
[361] us. There were three huts in the village and the headman's wife—not at all shy or diffident—after shaking hands took one of us (B. Z. S.) by the arm and led her into a hut. This
[342] had a good roof and walls of sticks, only one side being closed by bark slats, it was full of pumpkins and other chena
126 produce, which were however soon removed. We then sat down to take vocabularies, as the talk going on around us sounded quite different from Sinhalese and they professed not to understand our interpreter who was unable to follow them. So we
574 spoke through the Arachi. The headman's wife brought us each
609 some honey and yams and commanded us to eat. We sucked
● 43) the honey comb, but that did not satisfy her and she tried to feed one of us (B. Z. S.) with yams herself and to pour water down her throat. After giving us a few Vedda words, the Vidane (headman) began to talk very angrily and then stalked out of the hut. He complained that we had not given him presents and refused to speak another word until we gave him something. Other men came into the village making a total of about 10 or 11 grown men and some boys, but only two middle-aged women, the wife of the Vidane and another, so it was evident that there were other huts in the neighbourhood. We told the Vidane that our carriers would bring presents and made him and a few other men come back to the hut. But after every two or three words there were more angry protests and our interpreter explained that "other white men had not treated them so." When they raised their voices their talk sounded fierce, every word being shouted with emphasis and accompanied by scowling looks. Then we found out from the Arachi that these like the Danigala Veddas were "show Veddas" who had been utterly spoilt by presents from "distinguished visitors," some of whom

1:Seligmann & Seligmann E-5 (1907-1908) 1911
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had actually been to the village. They had been sent for often to see others at Wewatte and Alutnuwara bungalows, and for even greater folk had been taken to Kandy. And so they had learnt to shake hands and had picked up exaggerated ideas of their own importance and the value of their information, and expected a present for every remark they vouchsafed. It was a horrible change from the courteous behaviour of the Sitala Wanniya cave Veddas.

As the Dambani folk were so very unfriendly we began to hope the carriers would not come at all that night, there was nowhere for them to sleep, and we thought the Veddas might resent their presence. They told us repeatedly that "Sinhalese men would not dare to come to their village," in spite of the fact that there were two petty Sinhalese traders in the village at the time, who did not even trouble to go away before dark, but seemed naturally to expect a night's lodging, which was granted them without any fuss, and there appeared to be no difficulty about language with them. About six o'clock our servants and the carriers arrived, and curiously enough instead of resenting the intrusion the Veddas seemed very impressed by their number, and presumably our importance, in having so many dependents, for they became much more friendly.

The next morning early, we set the phonograph going with a Vedda song: immediately the whole village crowded round us, intensely interested. They recognised the song and said it was very good. The Vidane then sang a song into the machine and was quite excited to hear it repeated, but again began his demand for presents although besides a rupee we had now given white cloth to him and the other men from whom we had got vocabularies. Having obtained records we realised that it was impossible to do any good work among such spoilt people and decided to go to Belligala. We offered some beads to the headman's wife, but she said the string was not long enough; this annoyed us and we asked her if she would prefer not to have any, and on her repeating they were not enough we put them away.

The Dambani men said they did not know to which *waruge*

1:Seligmann & Seligmann E-5 (1907-1908) 1911
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105 .62 on their chena. We waited here a little while and two Veddas passed, one carrying a gun; we asked them to return to their chena and fetch some of the other villagers. Soon some twenty men and about as many women and children arrived bringing us presents of honey, pumpkins and sweet potatoes. Scarcely any of them presented the Vedda type, they were all distinctly larger and more heavily built. Except their knowledge of their *waruge* and recognition of the Nae Yaku all remains of Vedda customs seemed to have been lost.

Yakure. The inhabitants of Yakure, a village about six miles from Kalukalaeba, call themselves Veddas, though physically (Plate XVI, figure 1) they would pass as Tamils or mixed Tamils and Sinhalese, and show even less evidence of Vedda blood than do the Kalukalaeba people. Their village consists of about 40 mud houses and is compactly built; a great number of cattle was seen grazing outside the confines of the village. Like the Kalukalaeba folk they know their *waruge* and invoke the Nae Yaku, but they have a temple, a simple mud hut, and worship a number of Sinhalese gods. Some men (Plate XVI, figure 2) from a village called Ulpota near Gunner's Quoin were seen here who also appeared to have mixed blood; they knew the "Vedda language," that is to say we were able to get from them about the same number of words as we obtained at Dambani. When one of them was asked when this dialect was used he replied "only when we are sent for by the Government agent or any other white man." Among themselves they speak Sinhalese though they can also speak Tamil as it is largely the language of Tamankaduwa.

Rotawewa. There is a settlement of alleged Veddas at Rotawewa about six miles from Minerriya tank. Concerning these we were told that they cultivated rice, and were in no respect different from the neighbouring Sinhalese, while Mr Jayawardene writes: "There is only one village of Veddas in Sinhala Pattu of Tamankaduwa District, and that village is Rotawewa, about six miles from Minerriya. These Veddas lived on the chase and subsequently took to chena clearings, and when the place began to be frequented by the low-country Sinhalese and other traders, some of them were able to sell their meat to them and

1;Seligmann & Seligmann E-5 (1907-1908) 1911
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father's sister's daughter. The children of two sisters or of two brothers could not marry, and such a connection would be considered incestuous. The man goes to his future father-in-law with a present of honey, yams, grain or dried deer's flesh tied to his unstrung bow which he uses as a carrying stick. Whether he generally repeats this visit or receives his bride immediately was not clear, and probably the custom varies in this particular. Handuna of Godatalawa told us that he did not take his bride away until he had twice taken a present of food to his mother's brother (father-in-law). The bride gives her spouse a waist string of her own making which he never removes until it is worn out, when he replaces it with another made by his wife. In these particulars the marriage ceremony was essentially similar fifty years ago when it was described by Bailey. "The bachelor Veddah who meditates matrimony, himself selects the lady of his choice, wisely preferring his own judgement to that of others; and providing himself with the greatest 'delicacies of the season,' for example, a pot of honey and a dried iguano, proceeds to her father's hut and states the object of his visit. There being no objection to the proposed alliance, the father calls his daughter, who comes forth with a cord of her own twisting in her hand. She ties this round the bridegroom's waist, and they are man and wife. The man always wears this string. Nothing would induce him to part with it. When it wears out it is the wife's duty to twist a new one and bind it round him[1]."

582 583 431 584 585 431

When a girl married, her father usually made over to his son-in-law a tract of land, generally a hill known to be inhabited by colonies of the *bambara* or rock bee (*Apis indica*), or gave him a piece of personal property such as a bow or one or two arrows. The instances in which land was given are described in the section on land transference, so that here it is only necessary to mention instances in which personal property was given. Handuna received a bow and one arrow from his father-in-law who when presenting them accompanied his gift with the remark "With this bow you must get food for my daughter." Sometimes a dog is given, and Knox was certainly right when he

583 431

[1] J. Bailey, *op. cit.* p. 293.

1;Seligmann & Seligmann E-5 (1907-1908) 1911
AX5 Vedda AX5

583 said "For portions with their Daughters in marriage they give
431 hunting Dogs." Among the village Veddas of Bintenne we heard that an axe or catty was sometimes given, though the Arachi of Beligala, who has been much in contact with the Dambani Veddas, stated that these sometimes presented land to their sons-in-law.

In one settlement of village Veddas, Bulugahaladena, we were told that the bridegroom takes a first present to the bride's father and leaves his bow and arrow in his hut until his second visit with further presents some four days later. At the same place the waist string is sometimes charmed to ensure constancy. Among many of the village Veddas the custom of the gift of the waist string is dying out, and the bridegroom gives the bride a cloth as is the custom among the Sinhalese.

Another custom now dying out appears to be the gift from the bridegroom to the bride of a lock of hair, presented at the same time as the food to the girl's father.

302 We discovered at Bendiyagalge that it is a common practice for women to wear false hair. Here we were told that it was merely worn in order to make the knot look important, but only by married women. It is improbable that the habit should have arisen among a people so careless of personal appearance as are the Veddas had it no other significance than adornment, for it must be remembered that these folk never brush or oil their hair, or even wash it; indeed, some consider the last operation extremely dangerous, so that the ornamental value of a very small wisp of hair may reasonably be doubted. Extra locks of hair are worn by Sinhalese women, and we have seen some hanging in the verandah of a mud hut in a small jungle village, but among them it is a very different matter. They are usually, and very rightly, proud of their masses of long glossy hair, which they comb and oil carefully. A naturally large knot is considered a beauty, especially when stabbed with a jewelled pin, and girls as well as married women will wear an extra lock to produce this effect, but that the custom should have been introduced from the Sinhalese with no other object than that of personal adornment, about which the Veddas seem to care so little[1], seems as improbable as does the

[1] The Vedda attitude towards ornament generally is treated on p. 205.

1:Seligmann & Seligmann E-5 (1907-1908) 1911
AX5 Vedda AX5

Plate XXI

302
•431
585

Locks of hair presented to brides at marriage

[FACING p. 98]

1:Seligmann & Seligmann E-5 (1907-1908) 1911
AX5 Vedda AX5

hypothesis that it should have arisen among them solely for that object. 302

We believe that a lock of hair, either from his own head or from his sister's, was a customary present from the bridegroom to the bride, and therefore to be considered part of the wedding ceremony. The evidence obtained at Bendiyagalge, though not directly bearing out this point of view, supports the hypothesis when considered in conjunction with the information given us at Sitala Wanniya. The wife of old Poromala at Bendiyagalge wore a piece of hair which Poromala had given her. He had not cut it off his own head but had saved the hair which had come out when combing his hair with his hands, and Handi his wife considered this tail of hair as a valuable possession and said she would leave it to her eldest married daughter when she died. She told us that a woman would burn her lock of hair if she had no daughters. She also said that women would only wear hair from their husbands' heads and laughed at the idea of a man wearing an extra piece of hair, although the men usually wear their hair in the same way as the women. 302 431 585

At Sitala Wanniya each married man was questioned separately.

Handuna, the oldest man and our best informant, said that in former days a lock of hair was always given by the bridegroom to the bride, and if he did not offer it, the young girl might ask for it and insist upon having it. In that case the prospective bridegroom would have to cut it off his own head, if his sister happened to be away at the time or if he had no sister, for it was her duty to give one to her brother if she knew that he wanted it for a wedding gift. A man would always be loath to cut his hair, and there are special regulations against this for shamans, so if the girl is willing to accept him without his present, and he is unable to obtain it from his sister or *naena*, the gift will be allowed to lapse. This happened when both Handuna and Vela married. No man would give hair to anyone except his wife. Kaira gave his wife a lock of hair when he was married, and he obtained it in the following way. He said that when discussing the matter of his future marriage at home, and feeling sore at having no hair to give his bride, his younger 302 431 585 593

1; Seligmann & Seligmann E-5 (1907-1908) 1911
AX5 Vedda AX5

302 sister said, "Don't be sorry, I will give you a lock of my hair."
431 She cut a lock from her own head, which he kept until his
585 marriage when he gave it to his wife while she was still at her
593 father's cave. Then he took her to his own cave where she made him a waist string on the second or third day after marriage. To his sister who was then unmarried he gave an axe out of gratitude. Nila cut a lock from his head to give his wife, as his sister was away at the time he was married, otherwise she would have given him one. Pema did not give his wife any hair as her mother had given her some.

302 Among the village Veddas at Unuwatura Bubula the custom
431 of giving hair as a wedding gift was not known, yet the shaman's
585 wife had a lock which her mother had given her. She assured
184 us that only married women might wear it.

Anything like a formal divorce is unknown, but we heard of
586 one instance occurring three generations ago, in which a woman who had gone to live with her husband left him and returned to her parents. The daughter of a Bingoda man, whose nickname Kupunkarea is still remembered, was given to a boy nicknamed Kankuna "Sore Eyes." As he was lazy and took no trouble to support his wife, so that she was frequently obliged to go to her parents for food, they kept her with them. Kankuna was very angry, but he did not threaten violence or attempt to bring back his wife by force. Later she was given to a Vedda of Bandaraduwa and after his death she went to live with a Sinhalese. It was said that she was an unusually pretty girl.

595 It is quite certain that polyandry never existed among uncontaminated Veddas, but at Henebedda we met with one case that must, we think, be called by this name. Before relating this we may, however, call attention to the fact that polyandry is a tolerably common practice among the Sinhalese peasants of the Vedirata, as it is among the less educated classes in other parts of the island[1].

[1] Cf. *Papers on the Custom of Polyandry as practised in Ceylon*, Government Record Office, Colombo, in which Mr R. W. Ievers, speaking of the Kegalla district, says:—"Having been for six years in charge of a Kandyan district (Kegalla), and having to deal with land cases involving rights of inheritance, and having, as Registrar of Kandyan Marriages, to hear divorce cases, I have found that the custom of polyandry was almost universal; and that in the case of a marriage registered under

1:Seligmann & Seligmann E-5 (1907-1908) 1911
AX5 Vedda AX5

Nevill has pointed out that besides the territory of the group which is common land, every Vedda has "within this...a subdivision of his own which compares with the manor." In this he is no doubt right, though it was only at Sitala Wanniya that we were able to trace even approximately the hunting grounds belonging to individuals, which are theirs for the whole of their life, and descend to their heirs unless voluntarily alienated with the full consent of the group. So well is private ownership in a portion of land belonging to the group recognised in this community, that a man would not hunt even on his brother's land without the latter's permission; and if game started and wounded on his own land were killed on another man's domain, the man on whose territory the animal died would be given a portion of the flesh, apparently that side of the animal which touched the ground as the animal lay dead. Among other Veddas it was said half, or more generally a quarter, of the animal belonged to the man on whose land it died.

At Sitala Wanniya we not only found particular hills regarded as the property of individuals, but besides the big cave Pihilegodagalge, which was the property of the whole group of five families, there were smaller caves which were the property of the heads of individual families to which no others would have been welcomed, even had they thought of intruding. An exception was, however, made in the case of a man's *baena* (son-in-law), who we were told would naturally come and go as he pleased.

As has been shown in the chapter on Family Life, presents are often given at marriage, and these may take the form of personal property or hills or pools. In this section we shall deal with such transfers of real property, which in normal circumstances were made only to children and sons-in-law, and even then were not made over without the assent of every adult male member of the group. As this difficult subject does not lend itself to a general description, we shall limit ourselves to giving actual instances of land transfer with which we became acquainted.

When Vela of Sitala Wanniya married a woman of Bingoda his father-in-law gave him a piece of land in Marniye *pangua*

1:Seligmann & Seligmann E-5 (1907-1908) 1911
AX5 Vedda AX5

425 with a hill on it containing a cave called Marniyegalge and a number of *bambara* colonies. He was also given a number of
●431 pools in a river in Damenegama[1].
583 Handuna of Godatalawa on his marriage was given a hill with a cave in it called Balatgalagalge. This was handed over to him by his father-in-law and the gift carried with it the sole right to take rock honey on the hill, which was known to be the home of six swarms of *bambara*. Kaira Hudubandar son-in-law of Handuna of Godatalawa received on his first marriage a big pool in the Tota Oya river.

When Kumi the sister of the Vidane of Bandaraduwa married Tissahami, the bride's parents made over to her the hill Rajahele near Walimbagala, upon which there were about ten *bambara* colonies. Kumi also received Nalle Kotanwala, a stretch or pool—we could not determine which—in the Kalugal Oya. They also gave her husband the hill called Kuda Rasahele upon which six combs of the rock bee were known.

When Badapisi married, her father gave her husband Sinawa a hill called Bala Attahele on which there were known to be eight *bambara* colonies and a pool called Adanewala in the Kalugal Oya.

Tissahami the Vidane of Bandaraduwa received on his marriage the hill Maha Yakini Hela, upon which there were over twenty known *bambara* colonies[2].

With regard to these gifts of land we must record that although a man divides his landed property equally between his children in preparation for his death, property given at marriage to a son-in-law is counted as the daughter's share when the time comes for a man to make his final disposition.

423 When the land belonging to a Vedda group was not defined by natural features, such as a stream or hill, a mark representing a man with a drawn bow was cut upon the trunks of trees along the boundary line. It is doubtful whether these marks are

[1] We believe this was a small stream, and the right to fish in it was not highly valued, partly perhaps because not many fish were caught, but also because Veddas do not often eat fish when they can get other flesh.

[2] The numbers of colonies of rock bees mentioned in these accounts are probably inaccurate, except perhaps in the case of the Bandaraduwa hills, for most Veddas became confused when attempting to count above five or six.

[602]

1:Seligmann & Seligmann E-5 (1907-1908) 1911
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423 The care with which the seclusion of the rock-shelter is still maintained probably belongs to a different category of ideas, and is an example of the jealousy with which Vedda women are guarded.

423 617 At Sitala Wanniya we heard of the following method of settling disputes concerning boundaries, though Handuna my informant had never known of any example of a difficulty of this kind arising, and had only heard of the method of settling them from his father and father-in-law. When two Veddas, or groups of Veddas, are not satisfied as to the position of a boundary, the disputants each bring their "seisin" stone to the land over which the quarrel has arisen. Here the stones are placed in pots upon supports of the kind used in the Nae Yaku ceremony at Bandaraduwa (Plate XXXVI, figure 1). When this has been done the disputants invoke certain spiritual agencies, but who these are my informants could not tell me. As a result of this, a wild animal, usually an elephant, would come and destroy the pot set up by the party wrongfully claiming the tract of land.

231 431 Every Vedda has one or two dogs with which he does not readily part, though with characteristic generosity he is ever willing to give away pups to any of his friends or relatives. Vedda dogs are invariably well fed and well treated, and it was clear that the warmest feelings exist between a man and his dogs. As evidence of the importance of dogs in the community we may cite their use as wedding gifts and refer to the process of anointing them with a part of the offering dedicated to the *yaku* described in Chapter VI. Bailey's account of the relation of Vedda dogs to their masters brings out so much of this feeling that it is quoted here at length. "They have dogs perfectly trained to follow up and pull down the wounded deer. These they value highly; but they are of no distinct breed and do not differ from the ordinary country dogs. But it would appear that at a time when hunting was of more importance to them than it is now, the dog was more valued....

231 435 "But dogs are still prized by the Veddah. Of all his possessions he values most his bow, which is placed under his head when he sleeps; and next in his estimation is the dog who

3. A VEDDA OF DIVULANA

DIVULANA was recompense for our toil. The irrigation bungalow, placed high above the bund, over-looked the beautiful hill-encircled tank, whose glassy surface was broken by stones and snags on which cormorants and darters sunned.

Two miles within the forest lived Naga-Kauwa, a witless dwarf of fifty, the sole Vedda of Divulana. Born in Kovil Vannami, he came as a child to the Rasagala caves, of which in their best day his people occupied four or five. Now he and his family alone survived. Three years ago he had abandoned cave life for that of the *chena*; and there we found him amidst his cassava and the tender teak he nursed for a consideration from Government.

His stalwart sons—quite unlike the father—brought us some yams, a mouse deer and a primitive drum—the broken-off rim of an earthen pot covered with wanderoo skin and fitted with a taut fibre.

Kauwa's hut was a thing to behold. The Tamils had said, "See Kauwa, this is the way to build a house"; and Kauwa had built this crazy thing a child of twelve might have bettered. The thatch was a medley of dry grass and bark; the walls were of wattle, which stuck out untrimmed through the roof, and bark slats so poorly fitted together that there was more aperture than cover. The structure was no more than four-foot square and two-storied at that; merely a covered trestle three feet off the ground. In the lower floor his wife and children lay huddled like rats; on the upper, its irregularities smoothed with bundles of rush (primary elements of a mat), the lord and master slept. Such was the caveman's first attempt at fashioning an abode. By the entrance was a fireplace, and, scattered about, were the bones of monkeys and monitor lizards and the carapaces of tortoises that had served for food. Stuck in the roof was a broken comb of buffalo horn, true touch of civilisation, for the test of a real Vedda is that his hair must be stranger to a comb.

Getting information from Kauwa was like squeezing water out of a stone; he could no more describe the simplest thing than he could fly. Still, patience does much and this is what we gleaned:

Tortoises and pangolins are considered good eating by the Veddas; but the porcupine they abhor, calling it a *rodiya* among beasts, and only killing it to give to their dogs. Why Veddas never eat porcupine I have not been able to ascertain: it is said that, in the old lawless days, they would go the length of burning down a Sinhalese hut in which they discovered a porcupine being cooked. Pork they love because it clears the blood, and one or two pigs a month the Vedda must have. Venison causes itching and is not so good!

Vedda cookery, simple in the extreme, can still boast some tasty dishes: *Góna-peruma* is a sausage consisting of alternate layers of sambur meat and fat. *Lo-peruma* is the same, with the addition of a third layer of blood-clot. *Goa-thel-peruma* is made by skinning the monitor's meaty